

The Fantasy Stories of
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~ The Silver Flute and the Golden Fur ~



I

In the old days, there lived a shepherd boy named Eximos at a certain place. He had no father and mother, he was an orphaned child. He lived by looking after a flock of sheep every day.

In the vivid green plains, the sheep would be playing pleasantly. Beautiful butterflies would be flying around field flowers, many kinds of birds would be twittering in the grove of trees and high up in the sky. The sun would be shining brightly.

Eximos lay down on the grass and sang songs, he whistled. He made blades of grass into various kinds of flutes, he made stems of reed grass into flutes, too.

I wish I could sing like those little birds. But no matter how many times he sang or played a flute, he did not come close to sounding like the little birds.

Meanwhile, one day, Eximos found a pure white reed in a clump of reeds, that was thick and grown straight and shining whitely like silver. Because of the novelty of it, Eximos was looking at it dreamily for a while, but a sudden idea flashed into his mind.

What if I could make that into a flute...

Immediately, Eximos cut the reed with his knife, and

made it into a flute. Then he tried to blow on it, but not a sound came out. The reed flute was just only shining like silver.

Eximos was disappointed, but he did not lose heart. He made the next reed into a new flute. But not a sound came out, either.

Three, four, five..., no matter how many flutes he made, every single one of them did not make a sound. However, the more difficult it was for him to make the flutes play, the more earnestly Eximos made other flutes. He felt that the time would come when he could make a wonderful one.

At length, he came to the last reed. If he tried to make a flute with it but in vain, the novel pure white reed would be used up.

“Oh, God!” Eximos cried out. With all his heart to the utmost, he made the last flute. Then he played on the flute timidly...

Eximos jumped up. In his happiness, tears rose in his eyes. It made a sound. It made a sound. It made a sound of incomparable beauty.

Shedding tears, Eximos looked at the reed flute shining silvery, and he put it again to his lips and blew it. What a beautiful sound! It did not compare with the song of little birds.

Eximos rushed around in the field waving the flute. Then

he lay down in the shade of a tree at the edge of the woods, and he frantically continued blowing various songs.

In the meanwhile, he suddenly noticed that the sheep had come together at some time or other. On the trees, many little birds were perched motionless. Eximos broke into a smile. It was very delightful for him that sheep and little birds came together and listened to his flute.

Still, he wished they were no more than sheep and birds... Eximos started in surprise. In the woods were squatting here and there, various kinds of birds and animals, such as monkeys, wolves, foxes, hares, deer, lions, hawks, eagles, and so on, from where they had come, only God knows.

Eximos did not know what to do. Above all, he was astounded at the wolves and lions, the sheep and he might have been devoured by them. He immediately forgot the flute, moved backward and ran into the flock of sheep. But the fierce animals were still squatting and did not chase after him. They were merely following him with their gentle eyes.

Eximos rang bells and took the flock of sheep, and he went back to his hut.

Next day, Eximos went again to the plains with the flock of sheep. There were no fierce birds and animals there. Eximos was relieved and scattered the sheep in the plain, and he had a rest in the shade of trees and began playing

the white reed flute. The sound was more beautiful than he thought himself playing before. It was a song like traveling from the heavens.

Meanwhile, upon hearing the sound, the sheep gathered together around him. The little birds came flying down, too. They were all listening silently. Still more, from the depth of the forest, came out many kinds of birds and animals. The fierce ones such as wolves and lions came out, too. But Eximos was not so surprised. He found it very well that they came out only to listen to the flute sound, judging from the look of them.

Among the animals, there were five or six deer, tilting their heads, with big horns to one side, they listened attentively to the flute. In the middle of them, there was a remarkably big deer with a long mane like a lion instead of horns. The fur of its whole body was sparkling with gold, and its eyes were perfectly clear blue.

Seeing the big deer with golden fur, Eximos was surprised. He had never seen such a deer before, nor heard about that in a talk, either. When Eximos stopped playing the flutes and was filled with rapture admiring it, the deer with the perfectly clear blue eyes, seemed to be smiling.

Eximos went up to the side of the deer, he gently stroked the golden bushy mane, and the deer seemed so pleased and nestled up to him. Eximos started playing the flute and the

deer sat beside him and was absorbed in listening to the sound. And so, Eximos and the golden deer became firm friends.

For Eximos, everything was delightful. No matter how often he played the white reed flute, he never got weary of doing so. He would play the flute and many birds and animals would come out to hear it, they all would be good friends and just listen to the flute. Among them, the golden deer would be sparkling as if it were a king. Eximos would always walk with the deer. When evening came, the animals would go back to the depth of the forest, the birds to high up in the sky, and Eximos and the sheep to the hut. The sun shone brightly every day and various kinds of flowers were in bloom in the field.

One day, however, the golden deer did not appear. Other birds and animals came out, but the golden deer did not come out, no matter how often Eximos played the flute and waited long for it until evening.

The next day, the golden deer did not come out, either. Eximos became worried about it, and then he felt sad. He did not feel like playing the flute any more. *Is there something wrong with the golden deer?* Eximos did nothing but think about the reason for the deer's disappearance.